

him to make a well rounded and informed decision. The President can ignore the information provided by the victims and the law enforcement officers if he chooses to do so. I would hope that he would not. But while requirements that would force him to give particular weight to their views would most likely be unconstitutional, requiring the Department to make this information available to him, for whatever use he chooses to make of it, surely is not. Indeed, the President and the Department of Justice should be supportive of this bill as it should help return to the American people confidence in the clemency process that may have been lost following the release of the FALN and Los Macheteros terrorists.

It is unconscionable that in this instance, the views of the victims and law enforcement officers, the parties most affected by both the criminal act and the clemency, were ignored in the decision making process. This bill goes a long way in helping to prevent a recurrence of the defects in process in President Clinton's grant of clemency last September to the 11 terrorists. It will enhance the quality of information available so as to ensure a more balanced basis for the President's decisions regarding clemency. I am, therefore, pleased the committee has reported this legislation to the floor of the Senate, and I urge its prompt enactment.

ACTS OF BRUTALITY

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, for the second time in one week, I come to the floor of the Senate to bring attention to an atrocious and despicable act of brutality against innocent men, women, and children.

Just 8 days ago, the Government of Sudan bombed nine towns, hospitals and feeding centers in the areas of the vast country outside of their control. As I said a week ago, they did not hit key rebel facilities or strongholds. However, they did bomb the town of Lui and the only rudimentary hospital and a TB clinic for a hundred mile radius.

They killed, maimed, and injured dozens of innocent and infirmed civilians.

As I said last week, I know this "target" well. It is the very hospital where I served as a volunteer surgeon and medical missionary just two years ago.

One of the worst aspects of the bombings is that the Government of Sudan knew exactly what these targets were. There was no mistaking it. Rebel forces had even caught government army agents attempting to mine the airstrip earlier in the year.

Last Sunday, 4 days after the bombing, the old Soviet cargo planes, which have been converted into bombers, returned. They dropped no bombs, but inspected the damage of the earlier raid and, we suspect, continued selecting targets.

On Tuesday morning, just past 10 a.m. local time, the bomber returned.

It dropped 15 more bombs on the Samaritan's Purse hospital it targeted last week.

The sad part of the story is that it is not surprising. For years the Government of Sudan has targeted the relief facilities of organizations it deems friendly toward the rebels. That is, those who operate exclusively in areas outside of government control or those who criticize the regime in Khartoum.

In the town of Yei, the hospital has been bombed so many times, bombings of the facility no longer necessary even makes it to wire reports.

On February 8 of this year, one of those routine bombings of civilian targets was especially horrific, when school children in the Nuba Mountains region—an isolated area especially devastated by government bombings and offensive—were killed as they took their lessons under a tree. At least a dozen students and two adults were killed by antipersonnel bombs pushed out the cargo doors of the converted cargo planes. These were school-children. They were not rebels nor child soldiers, but children learning to read.

In that case, we have good reason to believe that the strike was retribution for the local Roman Catholic Bishop, who has been charged with treason for coming to the United States in an effort to publicize the atrocities of his government against its own people. It was a school run by his church and a location that he was known to frequent.

In general, the United States policy is pointed in the right direction with respect to Sudan: its primary focus is on ending the war through multilateral negotiations, and on aiding the areas of greatest food insecurity.

But the United States policy is not without serious flaws, the greatest of which is failing to use our full diplomatic and economic weight to change the political environment where the Government of Sudan can repeatedly and intentionally bomb civilian targets, including schools and hospitals, and not face a single substantial objection from any member of the United Nations Security Council—nor any member of the United Nations.

That includes the United States. We do not sufficiently use the international body to promote peace to even raise objections about the murder of innocent civilians.

This failure of the international community to forcefully act or to raise even routine objections in international fora in an effort to stop the most brutal and devastating war since the Second World War is as inexplicable as it is tragic.

It is also hypocritical when compared to any number of United Nations sponsored peace missions.

Why is the United Nations so unwilling or unable to act? Because it lacks the necessary leadership among its members. It lacks the type public exposure to the truth of the horrors in

Sudan to cause sufficient shame and embarrassment to change inaction into action.

The United Nations and its members do not suffer from a lack of information about the war I have described as lurking on the edge of the world's conscience. The United Nations own Special Rapporteur for Sudan has submitted an extensive report detailing the atrocities and some common sense recommendations for the body to act upon. But nothing has happened.

It is behind this veil of obscurity that some of our closest allies' inaction has somehow instead become the United States "isolation" on the issue. It is behind this veil of obscurity and sense of this being an esoteric American issue that inaction has hidden and thrived.

That failure, that veil of obscurity, is the greatest tragedy of them all. The United Nations was formed to stop or prevent injustice such as what is happening in Sudan. But it has instead become a vehicle for obfuscation of responsibility. It has become the chosen forum for denial and the Sudanese government's charm offensive: a concerted and effective public relations effort which portrays them as simply "misunderstood" and the victim of undeserved American vilification.

The United Nations should be the forum to pull the war in Sudan from the edge of the world's consciousness, to the center of the world's attention. To fail to take every reasonable opportunity to use the United Nations to generate the necessary embarrassment and shame to drive our complicity and compel nations to act to end the war would be the greatest failure of our policy and a tragic loss of potential for good. It is our failure to fully use the United Nations as an effective instrument to end the war in Sudan which must become a major focus of the United States policy.

If the United Nations is not used as a forum for resolution of a conflict like this, and if we are not willing to assert American leadership within that forum, the unavoidable question becomes what, then, is the purpose of United Nations and our membership therein?

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, nearly two decades ago, President Carter submitted to the Senate the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, known in shorthand as the "Womens' Convention."

In the two decades since then, the Committee on Foreign Relations has acted on the Convention only once. In 1994, the Committee voted to report the treaty by a strong majority of 13 to 5. Unfortunately, the 103rd Congress ended before the full Senate could act on the Convention.